
**JOURNAL OF THE
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY**

Volume 24

Number 1



2013

1913 Liberty Head Nickel Centennial



**The Walton 1913 Liberty Head Nickel PR63 PCGS
April 24 - 28 CSNS US Coin Signature Auction**

See pages 20-21

Photo courtesy of Heritage Auctions



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JOURNAL OF THE
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

Founded in 1989 by Steve Epstein
ANA Club Member C-146266

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BCCS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I write this message on February 26 with a big snow storm covering the Midwest, TX, AR, KS and more. At this point I'm a day late sending this to Eileen and may still have deficiencies when I send her what I write now.

I've thought about this for the past month—Do you realize a US coin sold in January for 10 million dollars? This price exceeded any price for any coin traded publicly, ever. The previous record was that for the 1933 US \$20 gold piece at \$7 million with special arrangements from the US Treasury. The new record represents the sale of a 1794 US dollar (with a silver plug) at the January 2013 Stack's Bowers auction. The coin was graded Specimen-66. This price is remarkable to say the least. Why do I mention this stuff? I see this as history in the making. I receive auction catalogs from Stack's and noticed this coin but didn't foresee it setting a record. After the sale, the record price was reported in *Coin World* and elsewhere. All this discussion revolves around history being made in the moment! As a balancing perspective, the last coin I purchased cost \$265.

On to Barber business. At the summer 2012 ANA Convention, the dozen or so attendees at our Saturday morning meeting discussed the timing of the meeting and Saturday morning. There is a history as to why, but it is irrelevant unless you ask me in person. There was a consensus the meeting should be moved up to an earlier day in the convention schedule. I proposed Thursday in the afternoon, but I don't as yet know the exact day/time the Barber-Society will be assigned. I don't believe these dates will be firmed up by ANA until the spring. Finalized date and time should be in the June *Journal*.

Despite the snow I mentioned at the start, you will be reading this message when snow is (mostly) a thing of the recent past. After a dearth of coin events during the winter months, consider getting to a coin show. There is a possible practice for the numismatist to collect in a solo setting, have no collector contacts and see little material except that from a select dealer or two. There is more to numismatics than what I've just pieced together. One should mix with other collectors, Barbers or others, look at other dealers' inventory, and trade experiences when possible. The Barber Society provides opportunities to do all of this. If you like this idea, visit a coin show near home and consider attending the ANA Show in Chicago, August 13 to 17 this summer.

Numismatic regards,
Phil Carrigan

Upcoming BCCS Regional Meetings

There are many coin shows scheduled during the next few months. Consider attending one in your area.

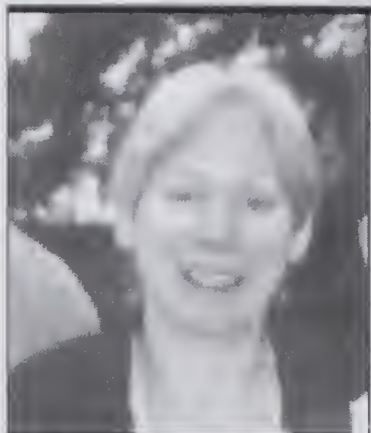
- **Baltimore Expo**, Baltimore Convention Center, Friday March 23, 3:00 p.m., Room 301. BCCS will have Table #1558 on the bourse floor.
- **Mansfield (CT) Numismatic Society Annual Coin Show**, Prospect School, Willimantic, CT, April 1. BCCS will have a Club Table on the bourse floor.
- **PNNA Spring Convention**, Tukwila (Seattle), WA, April 13-15.
- **Central States**, Schaumburg, IL, April 18-21. BCCS will have Club Table #211 on the bourse floor.
- **New Hampshire Expo**, Center of New Hampshire, Manchester, May 5. BCCS will have a Club Table on the bourse floor.
- **Long Beach Expo**, Long Beach Convention Center, Friday, June 1, 3:00 p.m.
- **Baltimore Expo**, Baltimore Convention Center, Friday June 29, 3:00 p.m. BCCS will have Club Table #1451 on the bourse floor.
- **ANA Worlds Fair of Money -- Annual BCCS Meeting**, Philadelphia Convention Center, date and time TBA. BCCS will have a Club Table on the bourse floor.

Please see our website for locations and exact meeting times, as these normally get confirmed closer to the show dates.

THE JOURNAL NEEDS YOUR ARTICLES!

Your article submission(s) automatically enters you in the BCCS Literary Contest. The article receiving the most member votes will win a 1st place prize of \$50. Second place prize will be \$25 and third place will be a free one year BCCS membership. So, make sure your membership is up to date and get your article to Eileen at the post office or e-mail address on page 3.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS May 25th



BCCS EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Those of you who have not as yet sent in your 2013 BCCS membership dues will find a reminder included in this *Journal*. Please mail your dues as soon as possible.

Spring, to me, appears to be the busiest season for numismatics. In addition to the numerous coin shows, expos and conventions scheduled for the next few months, the ANA hosts its National Coin Week each Spring. This year it will run April 21-27. The 2013 theme celebrates the "Buffalo Nickel Centennial: Black Diamond Shines Again." According to the promotion emailed, a North American bison named Black Diamond is considered to have been the model for the buffalo seen on the reverse.

ANA will be conducting a video treasure hunt focusing on the Indian Head/ Buffalo Nickel (1913-1938) that you are invited to join. Each weekday during Coin Week, you can watch a different video leading to a trivia question or challenge. If you can solve all five, you can win a prize. Visit www.money.org for details.

There will also be a Club Trivia Challenge: The club that wins the 20-question challenge will have a chance to win a prize. If interested in participating in the challenge, contact me. If BCCS wins, we will have a drawing among those members who contributed answers.

ANA also hosts a summer seminar. This year Glenn Holsonbake and Mike Hayes, who happen to also be BCCS members, will teach "The Coinage of Charles Barber," the week of June 22-28. You can learn more about this interesting educational course on pages 10-11.

In October I was contacted by Devin Healey, social media manager for CAC, who explained that CAC likes to advertise non-profit numismatic education. CAC offered to promote the Barber Society on its website and social media accounts at no cost to us. If you visit its website <www.caccoin.com> at the bottom of its homepage it has links to the Original Hobo Nickel Society, the Liberty Seated Collectors Club, and now the Barber Coin Collectors Society.

Devin went on to say that CAC offers some of its members a holiday gift (usually a year's membership to a non-profit numismatic society) and they would like to include the BCCS in this past Fall's options. Ultimately, twenty-four CAC members chose a year membership in the BCCS. I welcome them, hope they enjoy their experience with our Society, and encourage them to contribute their opinions and ideas in the *Journal* and to participate at regional BCCS meetings.

In addition to being your editor, I am also secretary/treasurer for the BCCS. In that role, I present my annual treasurer's report below. Thanks to our four very loyal advertisers - DLRC, Jack Beymer, Steinmetz Coins & Currency, Inc. and Heritage, as well as an increased membership due mainly to John Frost and the members of the BCCS Regional Program and CAC's aforementioned generosity, we are financially solid despite continually rising prices for printing and postage. (Postage to mail the *Journal* went up another two cents Jan. 27th.)

BCCS Treasurer's Annual Report

Opening balance January 1, 2012	\$8285.66
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Receipts:

Dues	4140.00
Advertising	1070.00
Back issues	100.00
Donations	70.00 (a ten dollar member donation plus 60.00 netted at an auction of a spe- cial 1912-2012 BCCS Barber half at the BCCS meeting in Philadelphia)
Total receipts	5380.00

Total funds available: \$13,665.66

Expenses:

Journal production	3026.00	(Vol. 23 No. 1-4)
1000 Envelopes	210.00	
Postage	1197.59	
Literary prizes	75.00	
FUN dues	15.00	

Total expenses: \$4523.59

Closing balance December 31, 2012	\$9142.07
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“Put Another Nickel In ...”

By **Matthew Student**

“Put another nickel in
In the nickelodeon
All I want is lovin’ you
And music, music, music!”

Friends, this article is written in a lighter vein. It will take a small look at our favorite coins as seen in the context of their time. If coins be a window into history, let’s take a peek, shall we?

To get you in the mood, link to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gUN-ZAmFfKA> and listen to Theresa Brewer sing as you read this little article.

Chester A. Arthur (1881-1885) The Brooklyn Bridge is completed and the first Barber nickel appears in 1883. And we all know about how the omission of the denomination on the coin caused trouble. Other trouble? August 26-27, 1883 - Krakatoa, west of Java, explodes with a force of more than 200 megatons. Now THAT was trouble!

Grover Cleveland (1885-1889) Both the Washington Monument [dedicated February 21, 1885, and officially opened to the public October 9, 1888] and the Statue of Liberty [dedicated October 28, 1886] enter the American scene. Is that nagging hole in your album for the 1885 causing you fret? Blame the Bank Panic of 1885, one of many panics, which affect the mintage of coins. Fast forward to 1958 to see how a minor recession caused a drop in the mintages of all coins for that year.

Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893) Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and Oklahoma are not yet states. Washington, Idaho, Montana, North and South Dakota become states between Nov. 1889 and July 1890. In 1890, Louis Glass and William S. Arnold invent the nickel-in-the-slot phonograph. Just think about how many “V” nickels found their way into that slot to delight the ears of the kids of the day. On January 1, 1892, the Ellis Island Immigration Station is officially opened. Both of my grandparents landed here from Europe. A day later, the first of the new Barber Quarter coins is struck. “Put another nickel in ...” And now a dime, and a quarter, and a half. Our journey begins in earnest.

Grover Cleveland (1893-1897) Back for another four years! Utah and Oklahoma

enter the Union. That controversial 1894-S dime. The 1896-S quarter and the coins of 1897. Still looking for an 1897-S half? I am. Some tough years and mints in here.

William McKinley (1897-1901) Assassinated while in office. The newly acquired territory of the Philippines, after the Spanish-American War, causes a flood of coins to be sent there. They come back in high grades but cleaned. Just TRY to find nice examples of the years 1898, 1899 and 1900 from San Francisco. Or New Orleans, for that matter! You are going to have a LONG search. And we ALL know about that 1901-S quarter!

Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909) His term sees the introduction of redesigned gold coins. Perhaps no other president had as much influence on the design of US coins. The first section of the New York City Subway opens on October 27, 1904. The fare? A Barber Nickel! Horn and Hardart, America's first major fast-food outlet, opens in Philadelphia in 1902 and reaches Manhattan in 1912. Nickels are plunked into vending machines. Mom took Sis and me to one in the 1950s and it was quite fun! The Barbers settle down into a decade-long run; simple, honest, hard-working contributors to the US economy. But the writing is on the wall.

William Howard Taft (1909-1913) Arizona and New Mexico finally join the Union. The Lincoln Cent appears and the Indian Head or Buffalo Nickel replaces the Barber Nickel after a thirty-three year run; 34 years if you count the 1913 Nickel! While America continues to prosper, the Clouds of War gather in Europe.

Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) Perhaps in anticipation of America's destiny to enter into war, truly "American" designs are introduced: the "Winged" or "Liberty" or "Mercury" head dime, Standing Liberty quarter and Walking Liberty half. It makes sense: stir up patriotic fervor with new coin designs. These coins remain very popular today, but we remain steadfast in our devotion to keeping the older designs alive, preserving and sharing the coins and their history.

Our favorites coins, designed by Charlie Barber, circulated well into the 1940s and, in certain rural areas, into the early 1950s. Slick as ice, they remain a window into our past, and a way to connect us to our parents and grandparents [or great-grandparents!] who used them. A phone call, a bus ride, lunch at a diner or dinner at an Automat? These coins, day after day, kept the War Effort going.

Folks, as you show your Barber coins to your family, consider sharing the history of their times. You, your kids and your grand kids will appreciate it, and each other.

ANA Summer 2013 Seminar: The Coinage of Charles Barber

By **Brandon Ortega**, ANA Public Relations Assistant

This year the ANA will celebrate its 45th Summer Seminar from June 22-July 5. Summer Seminar offers individuals an opportunity to enhance their knowledge of numismatics through a wide selection of numismatic courses taught on the Colorado College campus. With the campus located next to the Edward C. Rochette Money Museum and Dwight N. Manley Numismatic Library, students have many opportunities to tour the museum or conduct research. Individuals can also participate in optional tours, special events, receptions and banquets.



The beautiful campus of Colorado College will be the location of all ANA Summer Seminar courses.

This summer, professional numismatist **Glenn Holsonbake** and Barber coinage enthusiast and varieties specialist **Mike Hayes** will teach “The Coinage of Charles Barber,” which runs June 22-28.

This course is for entry level and experienced collectors of coinage designed by Charles Barber. Instructors will lecture on each of the four series in detail. The class will also review grading nuances of the individual series, key dates, rarity ratings, varieties, authentic versus counterfeit, and review other designs from Barber. Students will be given examples and have the chance for hands-on examinations of each series.

“If any student has a liking for the series, I know he will leave the course with a greater appreciation,” Hayes said.

Hayes, who has been an avid collector since his youth, demonstrates his enthusiasm for the topic daily while instructing. Holsonbake and Hayes hope that their enthusiasm will wear off on their students and they will learn to appreciate

the series with the same enthusiasm as they have shown. To encourage and help those interested in collecting or further exploring the Barber series, the course will explore the collecting opportunities involved with Barber coinage.

The instructors are also attempting to bring in one of the premier U.S. Barber collectors as a guest speaker.

“I would like our students to fall in love with the series and continue the love affair for years to come, or better yet, for a lifetime,” Hayes said. “If only one student in the class specializes in any of the Barber series, I feel I have done my job.”

Summer Seminar is packed with activities and learning opportunities in the evening after regular classes. Mini-seminars provide a chance to take a one- or two-day evening class; bull sessions are more informal gatherings built around a specific topic or presentation.

Students will have the option to participate in tours, including a tour of the Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine where they will descend 1,000 feet underground.



For questions or to enroll, contact ANA Education Project Manager Susan McMillan at mcmillan@money.org or call 719-482-9850. To see the Summer Seminar course catalog, go to www.money.org/summerseminar.



Dave Lawrence Barber Books now On-line at DLRC Website

All three David Lawrence Barber coin books - *The Complete Guide to Barber Dimes*, *The Complete Guide to Barber Quarters*, and *The Complete Guide to Barber Halves*, as well as *The Complete Guide to Certified Barber Coinage* by David Lawrence & John Feigenbaum - are available at the DLRC on-line library website: <http://www.stellacoinnews.com/>. Click on “Reference Books” and scroll down to the book title you want. Access is free. No membership required.

BCCS Regional Update

By **John Frost**, BCCS Regional Program Director

We had a great kick-off to 2013 with our annual meeting at the FUN Show in Orlando in January. Despite the absence at the show of a number of our regulars, we still had a lively gathering with a number of familiar faces and some new ones! The meeting presented the results of the “Barber Quarters Varieties Survey” just completed. After a discussion of the usefulness of the results we tallied, there was a unanimous agreement that we should move forward with Variety Surveys for the other Barber series. We also had a discussion about the Market from both collectors and dealers in attendance, plus a good “Show and Tell” session. In addition, two BCCS members, Glenn Holsonbake and Mike Hayes, announced that they have been invited by the ANA to present a class on Barber Coinage during the ANA Summer Program. They had presented a similar class last summer in Colorado.



BCCS at the FUN Show in Orlando in January 2013

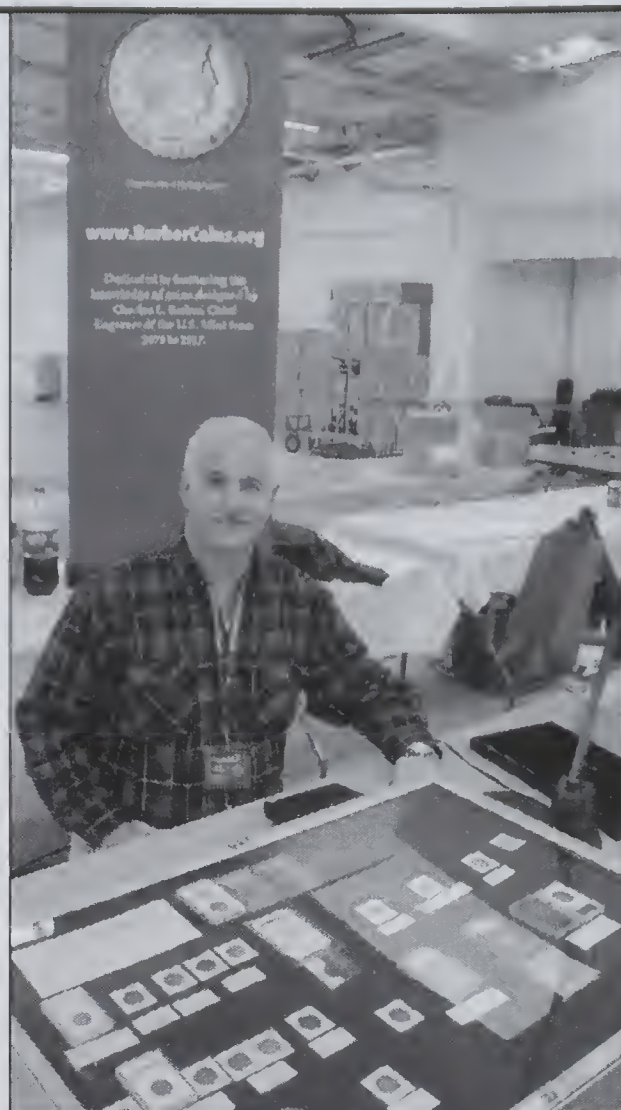
In Manchester, at the New Hampshire Coin Expo in February, a small meeting was accompanied by a lot of activity at our club table. Some new Barber collectors stopped by, plus we educated a number of other collectors on the Barber series in general, showing some nice examples of both coins and other memorabilia.

The exhibit included an 1893 Columbian Half made into a locket (at the Colombian Expo, with photo inside) along with an entrance Ticket to the Expo for October 9, 1893.

Also included in the exhibit was the Charles Barber-owned example of the 1906 US Mint Assay Medal (Theodore Roosevelt), designed by Barber.

Plus the silver “blob” artifact from the San Francisco earthquake and fire, consisting of 5 Barber halves and 2 Morgan dollars. (below at lower right)

All of these included the accompanying BCCS *Journals*. All got a lot of interest!



As you can see from the NH table, it doesn't really take a large exhibit or a lot of time to make a difference.

Our Regional Directors will be meeting in Baltimore in March, and we will have more of the upcoming BCCS Regional Meeting schedule defined after that meeting. We will also be doing a couple of local club shows in the next couple of months as well. Page 5 of this *Journal* has a list of already scheduled shows where BCCS will host club meetings or club tables or both. Check our website from time to time for locations and exact meeting times, as these normally get confirmed closer to the show dates, and for additional shows that may be added to the current schedule.

If you want to help the BCCS, please help us at a Local or Regional Show. Many Club Shows will give collector clubs a table on the bourse floor. It is a win-win: it helps bring collectors to their shows, and it helps the clubs. There is no better way to meet other Barber enthusiasts and it is great fun -- just ask any of us who have spent time behind a table! And you can help promote the club, and introduce people to Barber coinage. Please send email to BCCS@barbercoins.org. If you want to host a meeting at a local show, you can also check out resources at: www.barbercoins.org/regional.html.

We hope to see you at one of our upcoming meetings!



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Barber Bits

Letters/Emails to the Editor:

Perhaps this medal <http://www.ebay.com/itm/Puerto-Rico-Peso-Dollar-Medal-antique-silver-finish-60-/330838423006?pt=US_World_Coins&hash=item4d0781b5de> offered on eBay would be of interest to members of the club.

J.A. Crespo - BCCS #1322



2012 Literary Contest Results

1st Place - \$50 - “(Nearly) Completing a Set of Barber Quarters” by David Lange

2nd Place - \$25 - “Barbers From a Fruit Cellar Find” by Tim Glaue

3rd Place - 1 year FREE BCCS membership - “Renewed Interest in Barber Quarters: Primarily O-Mint Coins” by Michael T. Williams

Congratulations to the winners and many thanks to all members who submitted articles. Only three votes decided first and second place. And every article entered received votes which means it was appreciated and enjoyed by your fellow BCCS members.

Our 2013 contest opens with this issue. To be entered, simply submit an article for publication in the *Journal*.



Did you know you can send a quick quip or Barber Bits item for the *Journal* simply by entering a few words on the BCCS website? It’s fast and easy! See “Submit article” under “The Journal.”

Do you have a particularly attractive Barber? You can post its picture on the website’s “Gallery” page. Please send image files to bccs@barbercoins.org.

Here are the 2012 End-of Year Member Survey responses to the question
“*What Barber coin(s) did you acquire this year that gave you the most pleasure?*”

Robert Salth – 1909-O Quarter VF-35

Doug Ehrhardt – I completed my Barber Dime collection at the ANA World’s Fair in Philadelphia. An 1895-P, 1895-O, and 1896-S.

Ronald Stigler – I acquired these raw, uncleaned originals: 1893-S AU55 Half, 1898-S EF45 Dime, and 1901 AU50 Quarter

Thomas C. Vincent – I upgraded a number of Barber Halves from VG to Fine and purchased an 1894 Proof 65 Liberty Head Nickel

Bill Waldrop – these Barber quarters: 1897-S EF-45 PCGS, 1901-O AU-55 ANACS, 1901-S AG-3 PCGS, 1902-S AU-55 PCGS, 1903-S EF-45 PCGS, 1905-O MS-63 NGC, 1911-S MS-63 PCGS, and 1895-O AU-58 PCGS (CAC)

Robert Lubberman – 1885 Liberty Nickel, 1896-S Dime, 1914 Quarter, and 1892-O AU Half

Eugene Bruder – 1893 Half PCGS MS-65+ CAC - a WOW! Coin

Bob Duzan – The coin I purchased in 2012 that was the neatest was a 1903/903 Barber Dime. This is a raw graded “58” which is a new RPD (not listed). I have several coins like this that, if I could take good pics, I would submit to the club.

Robert Hess – An 1898 Liberty Head Nickel in PF-65 Cam – a beauty!

Rich Dowd – a 1911-S dime in Unc.

Paul Turner – upgrading some coins in my Barber Half set, and EF40 1909-O Barber Quarter that I just sent to PCGS to be graded.

Dexter Chong – a choice original AU+ 1905-O Quarter.

Tom Shvachta – an 1805-O Dime PCGS XF-40.

Kenneth West – none. I have sets of 5c, 10c, 25c and 50c; have had for 25+ years. I have extras, especially 25c and 50c’s in G+ to VG condition.

Donald Ballard – 1901-S PCGS Fine Barber Half and 1897-S Half in Fine

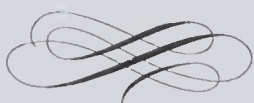


National Coin Week, April 15-21

This year's theme - "Buffalo Nickel Centennial: Black Diamond Shines Again"

Take part in the video treasure hunt focusing on the Indian Head/Buffalo Nickel (1913-1938). Visit www.money.org for details.

Club Trivia Challenge: The club that wins the 20-question challenge will have a chance to win a prize. If interested in participating in the challenge, contact Eileen. If BCCS wins, we will have a drawing among those members who contributed answers.



BCCS Journal Back Issues Discount for Members Only

You can order: 1 to 25 issues @ \$2.00 each
26 to 50 issues @ \$1.50 each
51 to 71 issues @ \$1.25 each

Please contact Eileen by phone, mail or email if you are interested in purchasing one or several back issues. You can request specific ones or a certain number starting with the earliest available or with the most recent counting backward. There are very few of certain issues left so please act quickly as it will be first come, first serve.

BCCS Advertisement Rates

1/8 page	1 issue.....\$12	4 issues.....\$40
1/4 page	1 issue.....\$20	4 issues.....\$70
1/2 page	1 issue.....\$30	4 issues.....\$100
1 page	1 issue.....\$70	4 issues.....\$250
1 page inside front - rear cover	1 issue..\$80	4 issues.....\$300
1 page outside rear cover	1 issue...\$125	4 issues.....\$400

1913-D Barber Half Dollar Could Rise in Value

By **Paul M. Green**

You could probably make a sound case that any Barber half dollar ranks as a sleeper today. You might also contend that any Barber half dollar has been a sleeper from the time it was released, as they sometimes have low mintages and prices. In that group of great values, the 1913-D has to rank high on the list as one of the best buys among the sleepers.

There were a lot of factors influencing the collecting, or lack thereof, when it came to Barber half dollars. It has to be remembered that when the Barber half made its debut in 1892, most people were not even collecting by date and mint. Such collecting, thanks to promotion of the idea by Augustus Heaton in the 1890s, would increase in popularity, but it was by no means widespread then.

There were other factors as well, as a half dollar was a good deal of money to most collectors of the day. Those who did have money enough to collect halves were likely to acquire a proof set and fill their collections with proofs. Lastly, the new Barber designs did not interest many. The first Colombian Exposition half dollars, based on the publications of the day, seemed to be far more interesting to the collectors of the time than the new dimes, quarters and half dollars.

In 1913, there were new collectors who were primarily interested in cents. There was also a new nickel that year and there was some saving of the new Buffalo nickel, but it and the cent were low denominations and that was what the collectors of the day were saving.

It could be said that the 1913-D half dollar, with a low mintage of just 534,000, should have been interesting, but the 1913 Philadelphia half dollar had a mintage of 188,627 and the 1913-S quarter was at just 40,000, so the low mintage of the 1913-D half dollar was not likely to have impressed any dealer or collector at the time.

Under those circumstances, a few examples of the 1913-D might have been saved, but it would have been few. The rest would have simply been allowed to circulate, and that would have gone on for years with few new half dollar collectors arriving on the scene.

We know this was the case as, about thirty years later in New York, a couple men started pulling good dates from they change they saw working in the New York subway system. That hoard, which became known as the New York Subway Hoard, was purchased in the 1990s by the Littleton Coin Company and it contained 24 complete sets of Barber half dollars.

By that time, some of the better dates in the hoard, assuming they were saved in the early 1940s, would have been in circulation for about fifty years.

All of that leaves us with an uncertain situation today when it comes to the 1913-D. We know it is low mintage, but it certainly is reasonable at just \$17 in G-4. In MS-60, it is \$500 which is barely higher than an available date, and in MS-65 it is slightly better than \$5,250.

Checking the numbers of the Numismatic Guaranty Corporation, we find that they have seen only nineteen examples of the 1913-D in MS-65 or better out of just over 100 Mint State examples graded. At the Professional Coin Grading Service, they have seen just eight examples of the 1913-D in MS-65 or better out of about 115 called Mint State.

From G-4 to MS-65, the totals all say the same thing, which is that the 1913-D could be much more expensive if there is any increase in demand.

Editor's note: The following chart gives a comparison of the prices quoted for the date, mintmark, and grades mentioned in Paul Green's September 26, 2006 article and those given in the February 2013 Numismatic News "Coin Market."

September 2006 article	February 2013 "Coin Market"
1913-D in G-4 - \$17.00	\$19.00
in MS-60 - \$500.00	\$755.00
in MS-65 - \$5,250.00	\$4,450.00



Things To Do

- Make certain my 2013 BCCS membership is up-to-date.
- Send in one submission for the *Journal* this year.
- Stop in at a coin show that has a BCCS table or meeting scheduled and introduce myself.

1913 Liberty Head Nickel Centennial

By Eileen Ribar

The Indian Head or Buffalo Nickel was slated to begin production in 1913 and Mint employees were instructed *not* to begin striking any Liberty Head Nickels for that year. Regardless of that order, five Liberty Head Nickels with the date 1913 inscribed on their obverse were surreptitiously struck at the Philadelphia Mint.

Credit for this clandestine act is generally given to Mint employee Samuel W. Brown although no concrete proof of his involvement was ever produced. It was Brown, however, who, in a 1919 issue of *The Numismatist*, advertised his desire to purchase any 1913 Liberty Head Nickels. Perhaps he did this to create a sense of authenticity to the nickels or to create the illusion that he was not responsible for their existence. In any case, the five nickels were first made public at the 1920 ANA Convention.

The five nickels remained together while changing hands several times until about 1942 when their owner, attorney Eric P. Newman, who had purchased them for \$2000, decided to break up the set. He kept the finest one for himself and sold the others. F.C.C. Boyd bought one for \$1000 and James Kelly paid \$750 each for the remaining three. A short time later, Kelly sold his three at a considerable profit.

Each of the three Kelly coins would change hands several times and would eventually be referred to as the Olsen, the Walton, and the McDermott pieces, so-called after those collectors who had possessed each for a lengthy time period.

Newman's copy was eventually sold to Abe Kosoff who in turn sold it to Louis E. Eliasberg, Sr. in 1949. It remained in Eliasberg's collection until 1996 and is known as the Eliasberg specimen.

Two of the five nickels would find permanent homes in museums: the Boyd piece was donated to the Smithsonian Institute in 1978 by the Norweb family and the McDermott piece was donated to the ANA Museum in 1989 by Audrey Bebee. An interesting fact I found on wikipedia.org is that the McDermott piece is the only one of the five nickels to show circulation marks. According to the website, McDermott "often carried the coin around with him, showing it off to bar

patrons and boasting of its extraordinary rarity and value. The coin lost some of its original mint luster in the process, and McDermott eventually protected it in a holder to prevent further wear.”

The Eliasberg and Olsen pieces would be auctioned and purchased by collectors who chose to remain anonymous. The Eliasberg nickel went for five million in a 2007 auction and the Olsen nickel went for 3.7 million in a 2010 auction.

That brings us to the remaining 1913 Liberty Head Nickel: the Walton piece. George O. Walton, a NC collector, bought the nickel for \$3,750 in 1945 and held it until his death in a 1962 automobile accident. The nickel was among hundreds of other coins scattered around the crash site which were collected and later returned to Walton’s sister, Melva Walton Givens. Experts at that time determined the nickel to be a fake because of a defect under the 3 of the date. Mrs. Givens, and later her children, quietly stored the coin for almost forty-two years.

In 2003, in answer to a request by the ANA’s World Fair of Money in Baltimore, the Walton piece was taken out of storage and reunited with the other four 1913 Liberty Head Nickels. Experts in Baltimore examined all five coins and determined that each one had a similar defect under the date on the obverse and a weakly struck left corn above the word CENTS on the reverse. The Walton specimen, long considered a forgery and hidden away, was finally authenticated.

The Walton 1913 Liberty Head Nickel will be up for auction at the CSNS Show in Chicago April 25th as part of Heritage’s Coin Signature Auction. It will be interesting to see what price it realizes.



BCCS “blind” Email List

The BCCS web service has the capability to send messages using a “Blind Carbon Copy” setting, which means everyone on the list gets the email, but nobody’s email address is displayed. The advantages to having such a list include the ability to post last-minute BCCS get-togethers at regional shows and other types of Society communications, if needed, without having to wait for the next issue of the Journal. It is completely voluntary, and is open to members only. If you wish to be on this list, please send an email to: BCCS@BarberCoins.org and your name will be added. Your information will not be disclosed to anyone, and you will only receive email regarding BCCS business from the BCCS email account.

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1. Promotes the writing and sharing of information on Barber coins to an organization of individuals who are interested in increasing their knowledge of the series; for Society purposes, Barber coins are defined as primarily U.S. dimes, quarters and half dollars designed by Charles E. Barber, and minted from 1892 to 1916.
2. Gives Barber hobbyists an opportunity to contact other collectors with similar numismatic interests.
3. Can promote consistent grading standards among collectors, dealers, society members and non-members alike.
4. Through group purchasing power, can offer its members discounts on numismatic materials relating especially to the collecting of Barber coins.
5. Provides members a means to trade their Barbers with other members, in an effort to upgrade or complete their collection.
6. Effectively lobbies numismatic shows and events to provide Barber exhibits and space for all Barber dealers to sell their merchandise.
7. Promotes the collecting of Barbers and the hobby in general to today's youngsters.
8. Offers benefit to all Barber collectors, whether they collect Barber dimes, quarters or halves, graded AG or MS65+.
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